

JPRS-LAM-86-030
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MEXICO

CARO QUINTERO PRISON INCIDENT HIGHLIGHTS INEQUITIES, ABUSES

Jewels, Goods, Money Seized

Mexico City PROCESO in Spanish No 481 20 Jan 86 pp 26-28

[Text] On Sunday, 12 January, the prison awoke, surrounded by scores of guards. For the umpteenth time, the sewer was uncovered: In a cell, that of Rafael Caro Quintero, the prison authorities, after a forceful search, "seized" electrical appliances, jewels, and money amounting to over 300 million pesos.

The drug trafficker's arrival in the Northern Prison had not only caused the underhanded sinecures fostered by the prison system to become excessive, but also made the internal living in the prison more expensive.

The authorities have washed their hands. They blame the guards for the corruption entrenched in the jails; while the rates of alcoholism and drug addiction are on the rise.

According to an account from the inmates, the searches have no date nor time. They occur at the pleasure of the supervisor on duty; after a dispute, when indications of an escape are presumed or occur, or at a mere whim.

On the night of Saturday, 11 January, the instructions from the prison administration were precise: search Caro Quintero's cell. Three guards were assigned for this purpose. It was shortly after 2200 hours. They accomplished nothing. The drug trafficker violently prevented what to the authorities was only a routine inspection.

During the early hours of Sunday, the operation was repeated. Countless guards, heavily armed, took dormitories 10 and 10A, both isolated from the rest of the jail, by storm.

Within a few minutes, Caro Quintero was forcefully quelled. The groundrules had changed, at least for the drug trafficker and his associates.

From a completely outfitted cell (small stove, curtains, rugs, electrical appliances, sports equipment, and a large amount of money), he was segregated to a maximum security area. While the authorities reported the fight and the

As soon as Florencio Salazar declared his candidacy, then Governor Carlos Jonguitud began undercutting him; he allowed him only four secretary posts on the PRI State Steering Committee, which until the close of his term and during the entire campaign was chaired by one of his confidants: Helios Barragan. Hernandez Lopez acknowledges:

"For 8 1/2 months I was fighting for two PRI's: Jonguitud's and Florencio's, with Helios Barragan as party leader the whole time. And when the time came to nominate a candidate for mayor of the state capital, Helios went after it. He was the one who had all the power and he would have easily defeated Medina de los Santos if the national PRI, through Maximiliano Silerio Esparza, had not taken him out of the running and sent him to Yucutan as general delegate."

When the governor was asked what he thought of the PRI secretary general's resignation, he said that he did not attach much importance to it, adding that Hernandez Lopez had approached him and asked for a job and that he had helped him out.

In turn, Hernandez Lopez remarked: "It would be very odd, if someone approached (Florencio) and asked him for a job, for him to put any old person in charge of PRI just like that."

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injuries caused to three guards by the drug trafficker, the drug trafficker's defense charged the theft of the belongings of their client, who claimed to be near death.

Two days later, to silence the speculation, the prison authorities allowed the press to visit the prison and learn the true condition of the drug trafficker's health. Caro Quintero showed no visible traces of injuries that could have jeopardized his life.

Caro Quintero was lying on a bed, under a blanket, in the cell, inside a dormitory isolated from the other inmates. He said that he was tired of so many injustices. "I don't know what Mr Sanchez Galindo, who often sends me special agents to confiscate my belongings, wants. They rob me, they take me out to INTERPOL whenever they want, and they take away my possessions. I can't stand the situation any longer."

In an interview with reporters, the new prison director, Rafael Vazquez Hernandez, said that the items confiscated from Caro Quintero's cells had been placed at the disposal of the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic.

Vazquez Hernandez claimed that, since he took office, Caro Quintero had tried to impose his own terms, to the extent that, to prevent the routine inspection of his cell, he locked himself inside with a chain and a padlock. And he noted that privileges are not allowed inside the prison, and that Caro Quintero "had taken things to the point of absurdity."

The director of the Eastern Prison admitted that there have been cases of corruption among the guard personnel, who have allowed items and clothing that are not permitted to enter.

As a first disciplinary measure, Caro Quintero was segregated. His penalty was to be 30 days, without a right to visitors, with the exception of his attorneys, who immediately obtained an "amparo" [a writ, possessing some elements of an injunction and some of habeas corpus] in relief. Two days later, the penalty was lifted from him.

In statements to the press, the director of prisons, Antonio Sanchez Galindo, admitted that, despite the modernization of the prison systems, there is still serious corruption among the guards, who are easily convinced by the inmates to allow access to drugs and liquor.

He also remarked that, owing to this situation, there are many privileged inmates in the jails who, because of their considerable economic power, bribe the guards more easily. Nevertheless, he admitted that some inmates have been permitted comforts, provided they do not violate the official regulations in this regard.

As for Caro Quintero's punishment, he said that it was imposed because "there cannot be a state within another state," and noted that this was the third time that liquor and jewels were found in the drug trafficker's cell.

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For the Northern Prison population, Caro Quintero's arrival meant that the internal living in the prison became more expensive. Like the authorities, some prisoners agree in citing the drug trafficker's presumptuousness. Now, everything costs more.

The common ordinary visitor is not allowed to bring in anything. In the search booths, he must leave his money, jewelry, cigarettes, or any other item or belonging that they consider unacceptable.

The situation is in contrast when the visitor is among those considered privileged. Outside the prison, groups of children offer their services to carry the heavy items. The youngsters go inside the jail without any great trouble. Among the inmates, it is known that Caro Quintero's visitors distributed money in large amounts. It is said that the tips to the guards were from 15,000 to 20,000 pesos each. The "tips" were larger when a party was involved. At least two inmates recall that, during the final days of 1985, the drug trafficker brought in musicians.

One of the guards told the reporter that the prison authorities were not dissociated from this situation. "Everyone enters here for the dancing. We are not the only ones to blame."

So now, everything costs twice as much. The prison is overpopulated. Each inmate spends at least 100 pesos a day on the roll call. Each visit costs the same amount per person. Liquor is priced between 20,000 and 25,000 pesos per bottle. The cost of telephone calls outside fluctuates depending on the time and the day. It is claimed that Caro Quintero has paid up to a million pesos per call during the nighttime hours.

Just in case, there is a change: chores. At another time, they paid as much as 50,000-150,000 pesos not to perform them. Now, they are considered a type of work to be accounted for to reduce the penalty, according to the Law on Minimum Standards.

With the new administration, the measure has apparently brought results. There are many inmates who enlist to do the work which they had previously paid not to do.

Nevertheless, the corruption is there. Now, it also costs to appear on the work detail lists.

According to Antonio Sanchez Galindo, the corruption in prisons "cannot be eradicated" overnight. "It is something that has been present for many years, and the battle is a daily one."

Prison Director's Corruption Alleged

Monterrey EL NORTE in Spanish 14 Jan 86 p 1-A

[Excerpts] Mexico City, 13 January--Tomorrow, Rafael Caro Quintero's legal defense will undertake to file a formal complaint for assault, injuries, and

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the theft of 300 million pesos, against the authorities of the Northern Prison, according to a statement made today by the defense attorney, Jose Rojo Coronado.

Both the defender and those in custody blame Rafael Vazquea Hernandez, new director of the prison, directly for the incident, claiming that he demands money from the inmates.

They also blamed Jesus Sanchez Galindo, general director of prisons, for the "policy of terror" established in the rehabilitation centers.

The defense said that they would demand that the liberties of those being held be respected, and that the pertinent authorities prevent the presumptuous conduct of the new director, Rafael Vazquez Hernandez.

In an official report, the General Directorate of Prisons said that it would not tolerate Caro Quintero's "usual presumptuousness," with which he is accustomed to behave in the prison, for which reason it was decided "to segregate him."

Access to the Northern Prison was banned today by the director of that institution for the news media.

Caro Quintero's Quarters Described

Monterrey EL NORTE in Spanish 14 Jan 86 p 1-A

[Illustration entitled "X-Ray of Caro Quintero's 'Room 10'"]

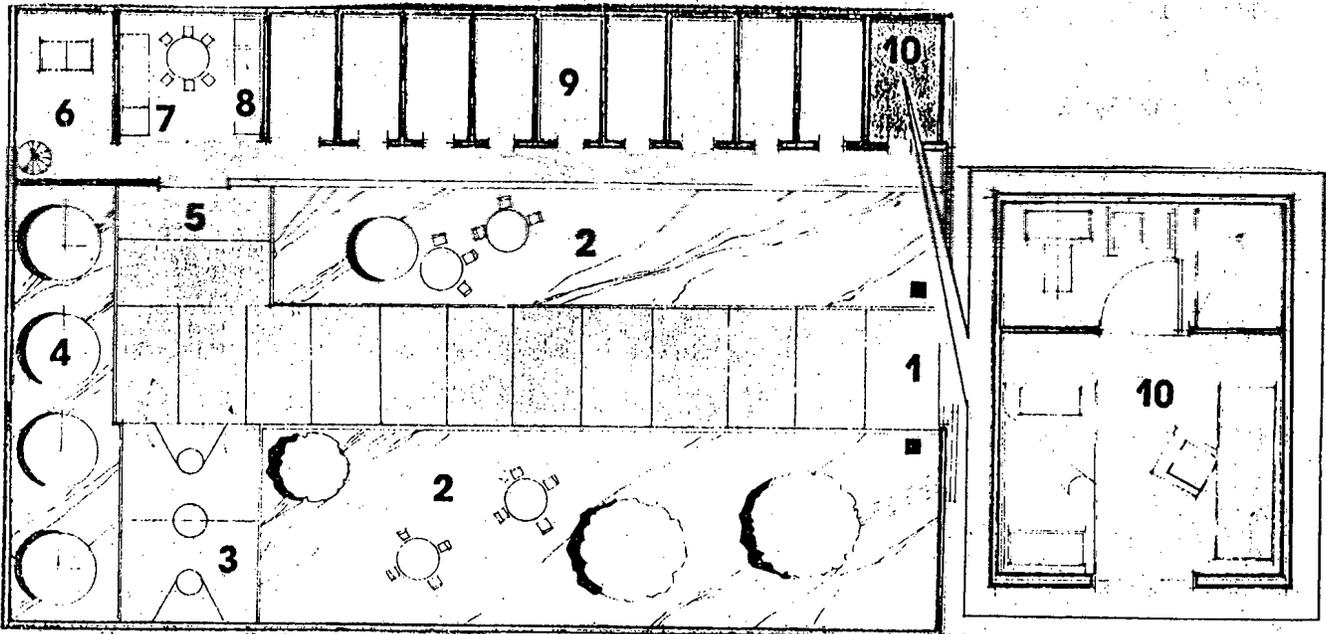
[Text] 1. Access to "Room 10" with a special guard force of two guards. The entire building, including 20 cells, a common area, grassy areas, and courts, is occupied only by Rafael Caro Quintero and five of his associates.

2. Grassy areas exclusively for those in custody and their families, with four lawn tables and chairs.
3. Basketball court.
4. Area with fruit trees and grill. There are peach trees, avocado trees, and ornamental plants there.
5. Access to the building from the cells and the recreational areas.
6. Air-conditioned open area with a gym. It has weights, a ping-pong table, and a platform for physical exercise.
7. Kitchen equipped with a two-door refrigerator, a sink, four electric burners, four butane gas burners, a blender, a table, with six chairs, and a small cupboard.
8. A larger cupboard in which boxes of provisions and general supplies are kept.

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9. Area of cells distributed on each floor, with only the lower floor occupied by inmates. The second floor is not used.

10. Cell occupied by Rafael Caro Quintero, carpeted, with curtains, a double bed, a combination desk and dressing table, color television, a video cassette, and plumbing services, including a shower.



Prison Official Resigns

Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 23 Jan 86 p 4-A

[Text] The chief of vigilance and security at the Northern Preventive Prison (where the drug trafficker Rafael Caro Quintero is incarcerated), David Rodriguez Tejeda, has been dismissed from his post and Pedro Gil Gongora has been appointed to replace him.

According to the General Directorate of Prisons, David Rodriguez submitted his irrevocable resignation, apparently because of disagreements with his superiors.

This shift at the Northern Prison, considered a key one, comes a week after Rafael Caro Quintero attacked three guards in his dormitory, following a search made of his cell.

David Rodriguez Tejeda, former chief of vigilance and security at the prison center where Caro Quintero is located, declined to make any comment regarding his resignation.

Meanwhile, Pedro Gil Gongora, the new head of security, refused to answer the telephone, and his secretary claimed that "he is busy inside."

With the departure of the security chief, it is thought that at least a dozen guards will resign from their positions. No information about any other resignations was provided for the present.

A week ago, the general director of prisons, Antonio Sanchez Galindo, ordered an investigation among the vigilance personnel, after the problems with Caro Quintero (the confrontation with the guards) and what was seized in his cell.

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ECONOMIC SECTOR FIGURES TAKE STANDS ON DEBT PAYMENTS

CANACINTRA Opposes More Spending Cuts

Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 30 Jan 86 pp 1-A, 20-A

[Article by Edith Jimenez]

[Excerpt] The people cannot be squeezed any tighter; the ones who should be squeezed are the creditors. The National Chamber of the Manufacturing Industry (CANACINTRA) does not support any further cuts in government spending, because it has been tightened to undreamed of levels, and industry is in very poor shape. If the trend continues, unemployment will be upon us, which must be avoided.

The president of the chamber, Carlos Mireles, asserted that the country would not tolerate more of the severe restrictions that are jolting every last Mexican.

We maintain that the country ought to set aside a percentage of export earnings to pay off its overseas debts.

Once more we are saying that if our creditors want us to pay them, they should buy our exports. The national budget must not be tightened further. If they want to get paid back, they should give us the work that will enable us to generate the funds to do so.

Mireles said over and over again at a press conference: "We must not keep on depressing the domestic economy to pay off our debts when our creditors are unable to acknowledge our excellent record as international borrowers. We've never failed to pay back a single peso. They ought to bear this in mind and stop pressuring us the way they have been."

Abedrop: Imports Before Debt Payments

Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 3 Feb 86 pp 1-A, 9-A

[Article by EXCELSIOR correspondent Francisco Garfias]